

NORTH DAKOTA AVIATION HALL OF FAME

Daniel Wakefield

Inducted: 1998



As a young boy growing up on a farm in Wisconsin, Dan Wakefield was inspired to become a pilot as he watched the presidential mail plane fly to President Coolidge's summer White House on the Brule River. He took his first aviation class while in high school in Chicago and went on to attend Haywood Normal College and the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire.

In 1934, Dan began his eight and a half year teaching and lifelong aviation careers in northern Wisconsin. He and a partner bought their first plane, commuted to Minneapolis for flying lessons and earned both commercial and instructor ratings. During WW II he joined the Naval Reserve and instructed Naval Flight students.

After managing airports and flight instructing in eastern Wisconsin, Mr. Wakefield moved his family to Devils Lake, ND in 1946 to accept a position as airport manager and operator of the Lake Region Flying Service.

Wakefield Flight Service was established as a Fixed Base Operation in 1947. He pioneered aerial crop spraying service in the local and regional farming communities, air ambulance service, and flew charter flights and line patrols for utility companies. He established the first aerial applicators school in North Dakota and trained many aerial crop sprayers both at Devils Lake and at South Dakota State University in conjunction with Texas A & M University.

He was a Federal Aviation Designated Examiner and an early supporter of the development of an aviation program at the University of North Dakota.

A founding member of the North Dakota Aviation Operators, Inc., in 1948, Mr. Wakefield served as president of NDAA from 1967-1969. He also served as president and vice president of the North Dakota Flying Farmers, was a member of the Civil Air Patrol, International Flying Farmers, and an enthusiastic and effective lobbyist for the aviation industry.

Among the honors received by Mr. Wakefield have been the Distinguished Service Award from the North Dakota Aviation Operators and the Outstanding Service Achievement Award from the Devils Lake Rotary Club.